



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

Center for Faith-Based  
and Community Initiatives

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7689  
[www.va.gov/fbci](http://www.va.gov/fbci)

# Information Sheet

October 2007

## Voluntary Service

### Building a Partnership with Community Organizations

#### Foundation:

VA Voluntary Service is the largest volunteer program in the Federal government. Voluntary Service was established in 1946 by a handful of veterans and community organizations. With persistence and dedication, we have fostered a tradition of compassionate and effective health care service to veterans. Primarily through a strong partnership with community organizations, such as yours, VA Voluntary Service has provided over 663.5 million hours of service to meet veterans health care needs. It is a foundation fostered by tradition.

#### Structure:

Voluntary Service is structured for the involvement of community organizations. As a member of our partnership, you would provide individual volunteers and group activities for the VA medical facilities near you.

We provide an orientation for your organization and training for your volunteers. Your organization would be appointed to the facility's Voluntary Service committee to provide support and guidance for patient-care initiatives. It is a structure that supports and encourages open communications, promoting a true partnership.

#### Transition:

With the number of American veterans growing daily, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is strengthening its mission to provide quality health care, benefits and customer satisfaction to over 25 million veterans. VA is proud of its dedication and commitment to help veterans receive the service they have earned.

#### How Can You Help?

Volunteer opportunities available for groups and individuals include:

- Reception/Information Desk
- Escort
- Transportation
- Friendly visitors
- Greeters
- Recreational activities

There are also volunteer opportunities for groups and individuals with specialized skills in the area of:

- Teaching/Training
- Recruitment
- Fundraising/Grant Writing
- Computer Technology
- Creative Arts
- Special Event Planning

VA will make it easy...

**We will:**

- Tailor a program for your organization
- Design volunteer opportunities for individuals or groups
- Utilize member's existing skills in rewarding ways
- Recognize volunteer's contributions

Together, we serve our Nation's veterans. Beyond volunteer involvement, your organization may choose to independently sponsor fundraising events on behalf of veterans and their families for:

- Polytrauma Centers for returning soldiers
- Holiday activities
- Recreational outings
- Family lodging
- Indigent veterans
- VA National Events

Contact the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center nearest you. Ask for Voluntary Service Office. Tell their staff of your interest in becoming a VAVS Volunteer. The staff will take care of everything else including your interview, orientation, and assignment! For more information visit [www.va.gov/volunteer](http://www.va.gov/volunteer).

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Q: Don't' my tax dollars pay for the care of veterans through the VA?**

Yes. The VA, like other government agencies is primarily funded through tax revenues. This appropriated funded covers salaries and other operational expenses. However, monetary and in-kind donations to VA are used to provide programs and service that further supplement the care of our Nation's veterans.

### **Q: What sort of supplemental programs and services can my donation provide?**

Your donation provides services that add to existing programs and enhance the comfort and care of patients, such as recreation activities, holiday programs, family lodging, and services for indigent. Local families have designated accounts for the special needs for their families.

### **Q: How much of my donation is use for administrative costs?**

There are no administrative costs when giving a gift to the VA! 100% of your donation is used for the benefit of our Nation's veterans and their families.

### **Q: Is my donation tax-deductible?**

Yes. The VA is a government agency and as such, your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### **Q: How else can my organization be involved?**

In addition to the program mentioned, VAVS can customize a program specifically for your organization. Whether you wish to make a one-time contribution or an ongoing commitment, we can use your help!

## **Choose to Make a Difference!**

Contact the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center nearest you for more information.